

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	EAS.88
Historic Name:	Gill, Capt. Beniah House
Common Name:	
Address:	1765 Massasoit Rd
City/Town:	Eastham
Village/Neighborhood:	North Eastham
Local No:	01-021A
Year Constructed:	r 1720
Architect(s):	
Architectural Style(s):	No style
Use(s):	Single Family Dwelling House
Significance:	Architecture
Area(s):	
Designation(s):	
Building Materials(s):	Roof: Cedar Shingle Wall: Wood Shingle; Wood Foundation: Brick; Concrete Unspecified



The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has converted this paper record to digital format as part of ongoing projects to scan records of the Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth and National Register of Historic Places nominations for Massachusetts. Efforts are ongoing and not all inventory or National Register records related to this resource may be available in digital format at this time.

The MACRIS database and scanned files are highly dynamic; new information is added daily and both database records and related scanned files may be updated as new information is incorporated into MHC files. Users should note that there may be a considerable lag time between the receipt of new or updated records by MHC and the appearance of related information in MACRIS. Users should also note that not all source materials for the MACRIS database are made available as scanned images. Users may consult the records, files and maps available in MHC's public research area at its offices at the State Archives Building, 220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, open M-F, 9-5.

Users of this digital material acknowledge that they have read and understood the MACRIS Information and Disclaimer (<http://mhc-macris.net/macrisdisclaimer.htm>)

Data available via the MACRIS web interface, and associated scanned files are for information purposes only. THE ACT OF CHECKING THIS DATABASE AND ASSOCIATED SCANNED FILES DOES NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LOCAL, STATE OR FEDERAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS. IF YOU ARE REPRESENTING A DEVELOPER AND/OR A PROPOSED PROJECT THAT WILL REQUIRE A PERMIT, LICENSE OR FUNDING FROM ANY STATE OR FEDERAL AGENCY YOU MUST SUBMIT A PROJECT NOTIFICATION FORM TO MHC FOR MHC'S REVIEW AND COMMENT. You can obtain a copy of a PNF through the MHC web site (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc) under the subject heading "MHC Forms."

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

This file was accessed on:

Friday, May 15, 2015 at 9:40: PM

FORM B - BUILDING

Pl. N. EAST

EAS. 88

Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Assessor's
Number

01/021A

USGS Quad

Orleans

Area(s)

Form Number

88

Town

Eastham

Neighborhood or village)

1765 Massasoit Road

Name

Present

Residential

Original

"

Construction

Eighteenth Century

See Bibliography*

Form

Center-chimney, 3/4 Cape Cod
House Form

Architect/Builder

Material:

Foundation

Brick and Concrete (S ell)

Wall/Trim

Shingles

Roof

Cedar Shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

Major Alterations (with dates) S ell added
(20th C.)

Condition

Good

Moved

no

X

yes

Date Twice

(Dates Unknown)

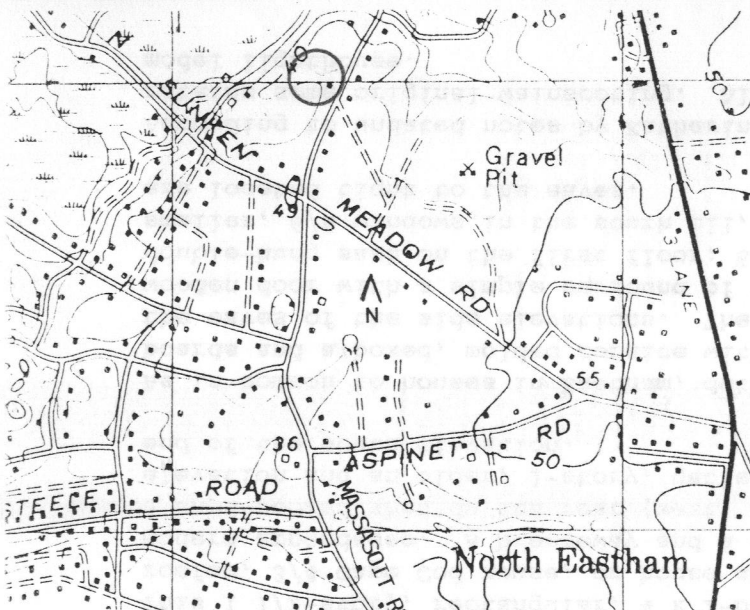
Acreage

11.69 Acres

Setting Located in a moderately-settled,
rural area with marshlands and a view to
Cape Cod Bay to the rear (west).



here. Indicate North.



Recorded by: Dianne L. Siergiej
and Sanford Johnson
Organization: Commonwealth Collaborative

Date: August 1995

RECEIVED

SEP 20 1995

MASS. HIST. COMM.

BUILDING FORM

1765 Massasoit Road

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION See continuation sheet.

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

This 1 1/2-story, rectangular, 4 x 2-bay, center-chimney, ship's bow roofed, 3/4 Cape Cod house, or house and a half, has been expanded by modern appendages. A breezeway and a gable-roofed, double car garage, with a shed-roofed shed on its rear (west) elevation, have been added off the north elevation and an older, 1-story, gable-roofed ell has been added off the west end of the south elevation.

As is common to houses in Eastham, detail is spare, largely limited to end boards and a boxed, molded cornice with an extended rake board set close to the eaves of the side elevations. The main entry consists of a 6-panel, wooden door with a simple surround of plain trim. Fenestration varies: 9/6, double-hung sash on the first floor; 6/6 windows on the second floor; and smaller, 6/6 windows in the south ell, all with plain trim. Facade windows are located tight to the eaves.

According to undated notes by Katherine Moore in the house file, the interior retains some original wainscoting. Also on site, northeast of the house is a model lighthouse.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE X See continuation sheet.

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Massasoit Road was developed during the Federal Period (1775-1830). By the end of the Federal Period, Methodists had established a campground near Campground Road off Massasoit Road. This center for summer religious retreats lasted from 1830 to 1862 when the camp moved to Yarmouth. By 1831, one of Eastham's five schools and many residences were located on Massasoit Road.

It is likely that many of the residents were involved in agriculture. Grains were an early cash crop in Eastham and later, asparagus and turnips became more common. Husbandry and fishing were also important sources of income for Massasoit Road residents. By 1901, at least seven farmers were living on Massasoit Road. There were also a clerk, lighthouse keeper, laborer and a grocer. A provisions store was located on the corner of Oak and Massasoit Roads. By the twentieth century, the road had become an important way from Orleans through Eastham to Wellfleet. Seasonal residents had begun building summer homes and cottages by the Early Modern Period.

Notes on 1765 Massasoit Road on file at the Eastham Historical Society Archives apparently prepared by the great, great grandniece of Sarah and Elias Chase (see below) indicate this house was built in the early 1700's by Captain Beniah Gill who was the first of many Gill Family members to inhabit the house. Although the 1858 Walling map credits the property to "I. H. Gill," material in the file lists Sarah and Beniah Gill, Jr., also a

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES X See continuation sheet.

 X Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places;
If checked, see attached National Register Criteria Statement form.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE (continued)

sea captain, as successors to the property. They had three children, William, Fred and Howard Gill. Beniah Gill Jr. died c. 1880. Neither Beniah Gill, Sr. or Jr. is mentioned in local secondary sources.

Notes in the file attributed to the Katherine Moore Papers on file with the Eastham Historical Society Archives indicate the Gills lived in the North Precinct of Eastham which became Wellfleet. Moore also states the house was located closer to the Bay and has been moved inland twice. Reputedly the west slope of the roof was once painted white as a landmark to sailors and fishermen.

Sarah Gill survived her husband and married Elias Henry Chase. On the 1880 Walker map, the property is still ascribed to B. Gill, but on the 1908 map of Eastham, it is attributed Elias Chase. He is listed as a section hand in the 1901 resident directory of Eastham. Sarah Gill Chase lived to 102 years of age and remained in the house until her death in 1931. Sarah's granddaughter, Sarah Gill Valli, one of the five children of William Gill, inherited the house. In 1932, she sold it to Carl and Esther Handel. The Handel's retained ownership until the 1970's.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (continued)

*House File 1765 Massasoit Road, Eastham Historical Society Archives.

Massachusetts Historical Commission. Reconnaissance Report: Eastham, Massachusetts.

*Hales, John G. Map of the Town of Eastham, 1830.

Resident and Business Directory of Cape Cod, 1901.

Roger, Josiah, Knowles, Elijah and Kinsman, Simeon. Map of the Town of Eastham, 1794.

Walker, George F. Atlas of Barnstable County. Boston: George F. Walker & Co., 1880.

_____. Atlas of Barnstable County. Boston Walker Lithographer and Publishing Co., 1908.

Wallings, Henry F. Map of Eastham. Boston: D. R. Smith Co., 1858.

EAS. 88

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

1765 MASSASOIT ROAD
EASTHAM

AREA FORM NO. 88



Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Community: Eastham
Property Address: 1765 Massasoit Road

Area Form No. 88

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement

Check all that apply:

- ☒ Individually eligible
- ☐ Eligible only in a historic district
- ☐ Contributing to a potential historic district
- ☐ Potential historic district

Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Statement of Significance by: Dianne L. Siergiej
The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

The property at 1765 Massasoit Road is significant on a local level with regard to the above-referenced criteria as one of the oldest, best preserved and most picturesque examples of the full Cape Cod house form (double house) in Eastham. It is also significant for its long association with the Gill family, several of whom were sea captains.

Original yellow form: Eligibility file _____
Copies: Inventory form ☒ _____
Town file(w/corresp.) _____
Macris _____
NR director _____

EAS.88

Community: Eastham

MHC OPINION: ELIGIBILITY FOR NATIONAL REGISTER

Date Received: _____ Date Due: _____ Date Reviewed: 12/6/95

Type: ☒ Individual _____ District (Attach map indicating boundaries)

Name: _____ Inventory Form: 88

Address: 1765 Massasoit Road

Requested by: LHD

Action: ☒ Honor ☐ ITC ☐ Grant ☐ R & C ☐ Other:

Agency: _____ Staff in charge of Review: _____

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

☐ Eligible
☐ Eligible, also in district
☐ Eligible only in district
☐ Ineligible
☒ More information needed

DISTRICTS

☐ Eligible
☐ Ineligible
☐ More information needed

CRITERIA: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

LEVEL: ☐ Local ☐ State ☐ National

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE by Peter Petrisko

1765 Massasoit Road, Eastham is an 18th century 3/4 Cape with a ship's bow side gable roof, 4 bays wide, 1 1/2 stories and a single center chimney. The property has 2 additions, a 20th century attached breezeway and garage on the northwest side and an earlier undated addition on the southwest side. The property was originally closer to Cape Cod Bay, but was moved twice to its present location at unknown dates. The property is connected to the Gill and Chase families, with Captain Beniah Gill, a sea captain, being the original owner of the property. It is reputed that the west slope of the roof was once painted white as a landmark to sailors and fishermen.

Staff wanted additional information on when the building was moved and where it was originally located as well as when the ells were added to the house. Any additional information on the Gill and Chase families would also be helpful.